

5. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the concentration of the buffer is from 10 to 50 mmol/l.

6. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the bicarbonate source is sodium bicarbonate.

7. (Once Amended) A method according to claim 6, wherein the bicarbonate source is preferably present in the solution to give a bicarbonate concentration of about 10 to 50 mmol/l.

8. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the solution does not contain glucose, or any other energy source which tends to degrade at physiological pH over extended time periods.

9. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the solution has been sterilized by an autoclaving procedure.

10. (Once Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the ocular irrigating solution claim 1 replaces fluid loss during surgery and maintains corneal function.

11. (Twice Amended) An ocular irrigating solution for irrigating the eye during surgery consisting essentially of a source of bicarbonate ions, a physiologically acceptable organic buffer which is an organic zwitterionic buffer having a buffering capacity within the range pH 6.8 to 8.0, sources of electrolytes necessary to maintain physiological function and optionally a source of phosphate ions and/or an energy source, and wherein the bicarbonate source is present in the solution to give a bicarbonate concentration of from 10 to 50 mmol/l.

12. (Once Amended) An ocular irrigating solution according to claim 11 wherein the organic buffer maintains the solution at a pH in the range 7.2 to 7.8.

13. (New) An ocular irrigating solution according to claim 11 wherein the organic buffer is a zwitterionic amino acid.

14. (New) An ocular irrigating solution according to claim 11 wherein the organic buffer is N-2- (hydroxyethyl) piperazine-N'- (2- ethanesulfonic acid).

15. (New) An ocular irrigating solution according to claim 11 wherein the concentration of the buffer is from 10 to 50 mmol/l.

16. (New) An ocular irrigating solution according to claim 11 wherein the bicarbonate source is sodium bicarbonate.

17. (New) An ocular irrigating solution according to claim 11 wherein the bicarbonate source is present in the solution to give a bicarbonate concentration of from 15 to 25 mmol/l.

18. (New) An ocular irrigating solution according to claim 11 which does not contain glucose, or any other energy source which tends to degrade at physiological pH over extended time periods.

19. (New) An ocular irrigating solution according to claim 11 having been sterilized by an autoclaving procedure.